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Twitter suspends account of Chinese virologist who claimed coronavirus was made in a lab – The Hill



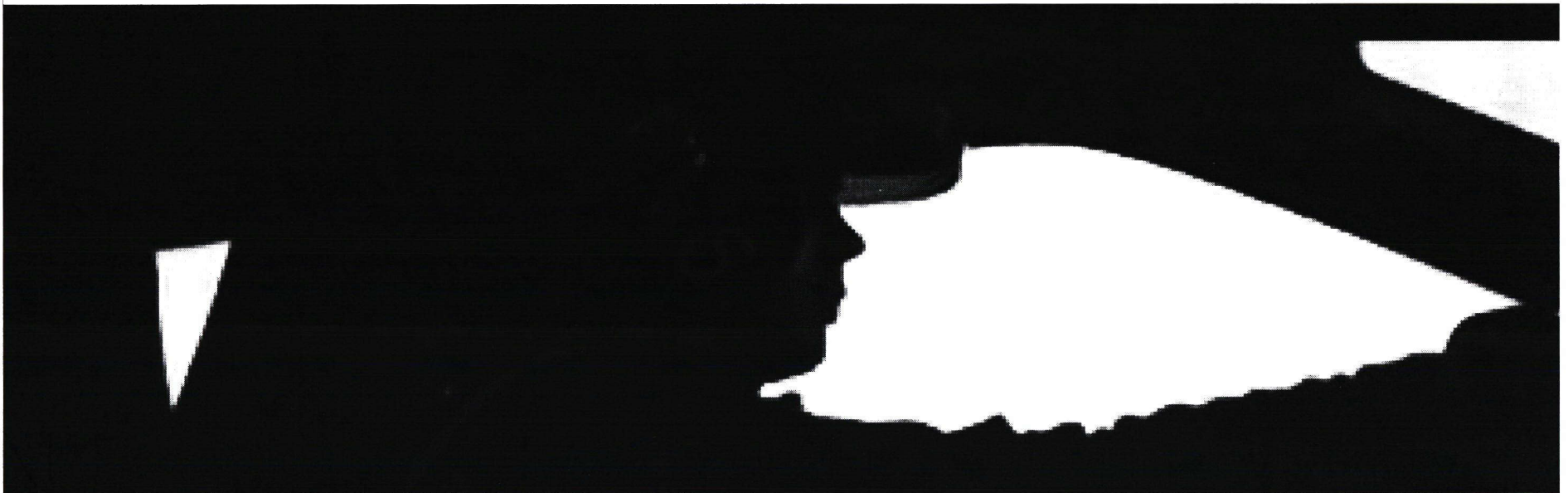
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Twitter suspends account of Chinese virologist who claimed coronavirus was made in a lab

By Anagha Srikanth | Sept. 16, 2020 | Sep. 16, 2020

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Story at a glance

Li-Meng Yan is a Chinese virologist who claims that SARS-CoV-2 was made in a lab in Wuhan, China.

Yan has suggested the coronavirus was released intentionally and that the Chinese government and the World Health Organization knew about it much earlier than reported.

Twitter has suspended her account for violating their rules.

Twitter has suspended the account of a Chinese scientist who suggested that the novel coronavirus was created in a lab and intentionally released, despite inconclusive evidence.

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Li-Meng Yan and other researchers posted a preprint of a study titled “Unusual Features of the SARS-CoV-2 Genome Suggesting Sophisticated Laboratory Modification Rather Than Natural Evolution and Delineation of Its Probable Synthetic Route.” The unpublished non-peer-reviewed paper suggests SARS-COV-2 was developed in a laboratory rather than developing through natural evolution, as several other studies have suggested. But the reaction from the scientific community suggests the theory is an outlier.

“This particular conspiracy around deliberate release from a laboratory has been doing the rounds throughout the pandemic. It has been rebutted several times already. Ultimately, it could be damaging to public health if reported uncritically without looking at the wider evidence. If people are exposed to and then believe conspiracy theories, this will likely have a negative impact on efforts to keep COVID-19 cases low and thus there will be more death and illness than there needs to be,” said Michael Head, a senior research fellow at the University of Southampton, in a statement to Science Media Centre.

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When asked why the account was suspended and what rules it violated, a Twitter spokesperson told Changing America they had no comment.

Yan first came forward as a whistleblower in July, telling Fox News that she believes the Chinese government knew about the novel coronavirus well before it claimed it did and ignored research she was doing that she believes could have saved lives.

“We have never heard of this person,” the Chinese Embassy told Fox News in an emailed statement. “The Chinese government has responded swiftly and effectively to COVID-19 since its outbreak. All its efforts have been clearly documented in the white paper ‘Fighting COVID-19: China in Action’ with full transparency. Facts tell all.”

The World Health Organization, which Yan implicated in her claims, denies any wrongdoing, and the FBI told Fox News it could neither confirm nor deny Yan’s claims.

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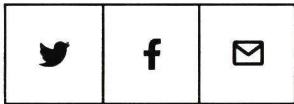
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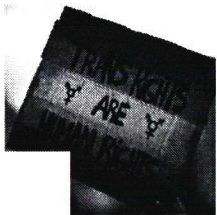
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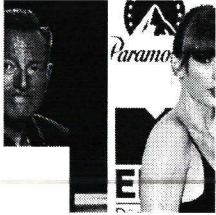


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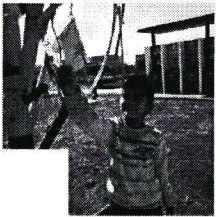
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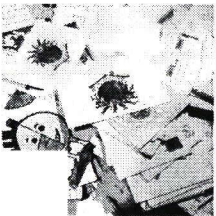
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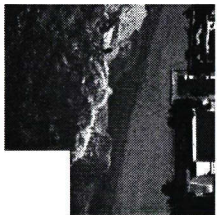
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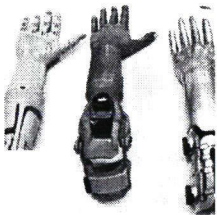
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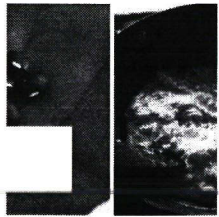
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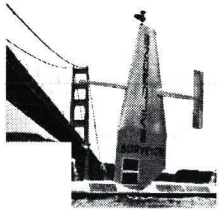
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